"The Great Ziegfeld" Opens Geary, San Francisco, to Best Business House Has Had For a Decade

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THE LITTLE PAPER WITH THE BIG IDEAS

"Easy to Digest"

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"THE GREAT ZIEGFELD"

YOUR editor is wondering whether the Metro - Goldwyn - Mayer production of "The Great Ziegfeld", really played the Royal Alexandra Theatre, Monday, April 13, or whether the pictured memory is a mirrored reflection of a dream of beautiful women, floating upon islands of swansdown, and surrounded by billowy clouds of lace, with moving clouds of chiffon veilings; under these canopies they fade away from our vision, only to be replaced by more beauty, with music, song, and dance of the long, long ago, or appear before our view in the modern raiment of our day.

"The Great Ziegfeld" appears to be a refined edition of the Great Barnum, the former who "barked" his way from circus to Broadway, for the glorification of woman, lovely woman.

There is so much of the beautiful in "The Great Ziegfeld", that it is impossible to criticize such an offering. One is, therefor, restricted by the immensity of such a production, to the selection of certain numbers which remain, perhaps as a comet might remain in our memory, moving across a sky alight with uncountable stars.

There is Fanny Brice, as Fanny Brice, just as good as she ever was, and giving that human touch to so much that seemed a fantasy, a fairy-tale come true, through the wizardry of the Screen. Fanny Brice brings us back to earth, after our trip through the clouds, and she puts over her singing numbers in her grand old way.

A. A. Trimble, as Will Rogers, is such an excellent impression, that it appears as if Will Rogers is right there before us. Buddy Doyle as Eddie Cantor, is another realistic touch, furnishing minutes of bubbling entertainment, which only the real Eddie Cantor could equal, or excel.

There is Frank Morgan as "Billings", a barker in ye good olde days, just as Ziegfeld was, and climbing with him along those histrionic rungs of the Ladder of Fame, into that Show World famous for its Frohmans, Klaw and Erlangers, David Belascos, etc., etc., which gave us The Art of the Theatre. Frank Morgan's "Billings" is a character, he breathes, he lives, you admire him; and you love him because he never let Ziegfeld down.

Harriet Hoctor and her ballet are exquisite, such glamorous rhythm, such animated imagery, at times it appeared as if here was a Tower, the Tower of Babylon, built, not of stone, but of beautiful girls, their loveliness pyramiding an Idyll, a dream of beauty, of love, of song; dancing their way into the Heart of the World, making it young, young as Dr. Faustus, that old philosopher, became, after he had pledged his soul to Mephistopheles, for Marguerite, that lovely woman; that she might love and be loved by him.

All through "The Great Ziegfeld", the theme is Love, whether it is expressed in song, or in the dance, in the romance between Ziegfeld and Anna Held, or between Ziegfeld and Billie Burke.

Louise Rainer is Anna Held. She is the star, the most starry star in this MAMMOTH DESIGN OF LYRICAL PAGEANTRY! She is exquisite, she is womanly, she is fascinating, she is the Greatness in "The Great Ziegfeld", she is the Anna Held whom "The Great Ziegfeld" would have loved and married, and having once loved her, he would remember her, when Time had given them The Crossroads of their Separation. He would remember her, when all women faded from his film-covered eyes, fastened upon the Glorified Ziegfeld Showgirl, for the last time, in that sick room, as he, himself answers the Last Curtain Call!

RAY PRESENTS

RAY LEWIS

I HAVE not commented on the work of William Powell, as "Ziegfeld", in "The Great Ziegfeld", my readers know that I am a Powell fan, but only at the finish of the picture, when Ziegfeld is dying, did I feel that Powell was not Powell.

I knew Billie Burke in her former days, and while Myrna Loy gave a good performance, she was not the Billie Burke whom I remember!

Irving Berlin and Jerome Kern, Rudolf Friml, Donaldson and Kahn, Tiernay and McCarthy, Dave Stamper, B. G. De Sylva are responsible for the musical numbers in "The Great Ziegfeld". Hunt Stromberg is the producer, and Robert Z. Leonard, the director. Wm. Anthony McQuire is the author.

THE Dances and Ensembles, gorgeous creations, most effectively as well as extravagantly staged, were under the direction of Walter Donaldson and Harold Adamson. The Lyrics are by Herb Magidson, and the musical direction by Arthur Lange. The production staff to which the producer, Hunt Stromberg refers, includes a long list of names, all of which contributed to the complete production of this close to three hours show.

Apropos of Irving Berlin, I recently had a talk with Alex Cherniavsky, of that famous musical family. Alex is in charge of the Entertainment program for the British South African Fair, to be held at Johannesburg, South Africa, this summer. He informed me that had Berlin been born in the age of the great composers, and followed their inclinations, he had within him the genius of becoming a composer of their class. All hail, Irving Berlin, who might have been among the Immortals, had he been born a century earlier, but being born in our age, he has diverted his talents in that direction which gives him popular acclaim and millions. Who is to say that it is better to starve in an attic and be a Beethoven, than be an Irving Berlin and live luxuriously? Alex Cherniavsky states, in all seriousness, that he would prefer to be a Chopin, or any of the great composers, and be buried in a pauper's field, than receive acclaim today, and be buried in Westminster Abbey.

But then, you know the Cherniavskys have inherited their music; like father, like sons, even unto the women of the family.

TALKING of Pauper's Field, recalls to my mind a story which I heard, while I was in London, told to me by a D.S.O. when I was in discussion with him in respect to the funeral of his late Majesty, King George V. This officer told me, that just one month prior to the death of the King, an old soldier had passed away, he lived on Paddington St., not so far from Baker Street. He was to be buried in Pauper's Field, a finale to his life which he always had feared.

Someone told the Prince of Wales about him, and the Prince of Wales investigated, found the old regiment to which this old soldier had belonged, and on the day of the funeral, the gun-wagon, with officers and soldiers of the regiment to which the old soldier had belonged, drew up to his home; and with full military honours, and at the expense of the Prince of Wales and the regiment, this old soldier was given a military funeral, and a burial and resting place befitting a soldier who had fought the battles of his country.

I am relating this to you, my readers, because it is a fine enough story to introduce, as an episode, into a picture into which it would fit, and it is a true story.

BUT to return to my Radio-RKO brief case, of which mention was made in this column last week, it also contained, an announcement regarding "The Return of Peter Grimm", with Lionel Barrymore, an adaptation of the David Belasco drama, which I had the pleasure of viewing, while in London. It is a splendid picture in which Lionel Barrymore does some great work. It has been directed by George Nicholls Jr. and in the cast Helen Mack, Edward Ellis and Donald Meek are featured players.

Then there is the Bert Wheeler and Robert Woolsey, "Silly Billies", comedy, more cuckoo than ever, but it's pleasant to go "cuckoo" for an evening, for did not a very wise man say, "a little nonsense now and then is relished by the wisest of men"? "Another Face" with Wallace Ford, Brian Donlevy, Phyllis Brooks, Erik Rhodes, Alan Hale, Addison Randall, Paul Stanton, was directed by Christy Cabanne. The name of this director should mean much to you, exhibitors.

I am under the impression that I saw this picture while in London, also, at a trade show. It had a different title, "It Happened at Hollywood", I believe Radio-RKO called it. It was unusual for that type of a story, and it was excitingly good.

In Toronto last week, we had Warner Bros. masterpiece, "The Story of Louis Pasteur", and this week that Technicolor production, "The Trail of the Lonesome Pine", both pictures which have already won acclaim for their producers.

The latter picture has been held over for a second week at the Uptown, and so has "Wife vs. Secretary", with Jean Harlow, Clark Gable and Myrna Loy, at Loew's, Toronto. Here is

Famous Players Officers Salaries—Directors Fees Total $126,795.78 for Year
Earned Surplus $3,907,907.42

where Myrna Loy does some excellent work, giving Jean Harlow a hard battle to "cut in" on the Clark Gable husband.

AT Shea's, I saw an entertaining picture, 20th Century - Fox, "Professional Soldier", with Freddie Bartholomew and Victor McLaglen — and at the Imperial, a Shirley Temple feature, "Captain January", one of her best. Remembering Shirley Temple and Guy Kibbee in that delightful one and a half hours of entertainment in "Captain January", I am, in contrast, unpleasantly reminded of one of the worst pictures I have ever seen, Columbia's "Hoi Polloi", with the "Three Stooges", which, had I been a film censor, I never would have passed, for every minute of it, was a minute of vulgarity.

"Hoi Polloi" is just as bad as it sounds. It opened the show at Shea's, Toronto, but it gave me such a bad taste, that it was only when the show was half over, that I commenced to be entertained.

We have a new girl-show, at Toronto, in competition with the Roxy, in fact just a few doors away. It is called "The Casino", and started off with a Midnite Show last Sunday. That is a minute after midnight, since in Toronto, no shows are allowed on Sunday.

Queen St., just at Bay, is not what we Torontonians call a high-class district, the home of the Roxy and Casino shows, although the City Hall is just across the way, and opposite Shea's Hippodrome.

Shea's has a weekly chorus, of dancing and singing girls. What the new show is going to do to Shea's, the latter which caters to those who like Vodevil once a week, for their Theatre Fare, remains to be seen. Shea's gets all the people, who like Vodevil, the Shea name is famous in Show Business in Toronto, back to the very days, when Toronto was beginning to get its big city complex.

THERE is plenty of other building going on in Toronto, in the suburbs; in the recently built-up shopping and residential centres, as well as in the districts in which theatres already operate. Very soon, the downtown houses will be obliged to cater to that patronage which is out for the night, and which passes its doors. The neighborhood houses will be the theatres, which will be showing profits only, for what does it profit a man, to come home from business, tired, get into his car, after a hurried dinner to drive down town, get into a parking garage, for which he pays at least fifteen cents, and then drive home, perhaps in bad weather, just to see the same kind of a show, which he can see around the corner from his own home? The latter show affords him a chance to eat his dinner slowly, take a little walk, to and from the theatre, and see a show at just one-half the cost of the show downown!

A visit to Hamilton last week, five theatres, James Street, Main Street, on Good Friday, saw every one of these theatres, between two to six P.M. — comfortably filled, and some of them were almost next door to each other. The Savoy, although closed, looks like a real theatre, and I heard that a new theatre, despite the fact that the Savoy is closed, is going to be built quite close to it. There are about eighteen theatres in Hamilton, and they all, that is those which are opened, appear to be making money.

At St. Catharines, I visited the Famous house, with a line-up on the street, because the house has no lobby sufficient in size to take care of its crowds.

It's a good idea to have theatre patronage line up on the street, so that anyone, who has an idea to build a theatre in the town, can bring those interested to count the number of people on the sidewalk, who cannot get in.

Cleaning House

B. C. LEWIS, Sales Manager of Dominion Sound Equipments Limited, in an interview with a representative of The Digest, revealed that there was evidence of a trend toward the renovation and re-equipment of Motion Picture Theatres throughout the Dominion.

His firm, he declared, had recently installed Sound Equipment in a large number of houses, among which were: Capitol, Joliette, Que.; Imperial, Levis, Que.; Stella, Montreal, Que.; Lauder, Mount Forest, Ont.; Eglinton, Toronto, Ont.; Uptown, Orangeville, Ont.; Victoria, Ottawa, Ont.

Installation also will be completed shortly in: Capitol, Port Alberni, B.C.; Atlas, Victoria, B.C.; whilst the following houses had made special provision for their patrons, who are hard of hearing, by installing in a number of seats a new hearing aid somewhat similar to the audiphone which is a portable sound amplifier for the deaf: Strand, Saint John, N.B.; Oxford, Toronto, Ont.; Eglinton, Toronto, Ont.; Lyric, Kitchener, Ont.; Capitol, Edmonton, Alta.

Servicing of Sound Equipments also is now generally recognized by exhibitors as essential to continuous first-class performance, with the result that this side of the business is more active than ever.

A remarkable feature of the Sound Picture field is the infrequent shut-downs, with consequent loss of patronage, in those theatres which have been regularly serviced from date of installation, the records of which prove the value of constant inspection by competent engineers as an insurance against breakdowns.

The few cases of loss of operating time due to accident, Mr. Lewis remarked, would furnish a thrilling romance which might well be based upon the showman's motto "The Show Must Go On".

THEATRE SITE

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BOX 9—DIGEST—THEATRE FOR RENT

Warner Bros. "Anthony Adverse" and "Green Pastures" for Two-a-Day Road Shows

British Film Digest

Special to The Digest from our London Correspondent Dennison Thornton.

ADMITTEDLY the superior of most epics of its kind and often the spectacular equal of "Cimarron" in its bold and sweeping picturization of an Empire in the making, "Rhodes of Africa" emerges from the Gaumont-British studios a credit to the daring and enterprise of its producers. From the industry's standpoint it will add enormously to the prestige of British pictures, for quite aside from the merits of the film itself the importance of this "Rhodes" is considerably increased by way of the fact that it represents the first big attempt on the part of British producers to put the Empire on the screen and to utilize the resources of the open spaces hitherto exploited by Hollywood in its "Covered Wagon's" and its "Cimarron's". For this reason alone the Gaumont epic is bound to arouse great interest and curiosity wherever it is shown.

To present the story of Rhodes, the man, at the same time to even partly dramatize South Africa's early development was no easy undertaking. In their film the producers have concentrated on Rhodes, the man rather than on the actual development of the country he visited. Their achievement is a first-rate chronicle picture and not a contribution to the "private life" gallery of cinematic portraiture. What the director, Berthold Viertel has attempted, and attempted simply, sincerely and effectively, is to sketch the career of the central character and to show in a series of finely reconstructed scenes the main events of that career insofar as they have direct bearing upon the ultimate realization of a united South Africa — the ideal for which Rhodes strove.

It is true that the picture invites criticism on the grounds of incidental inaccuracy. I am told, for example, that Rhodes never met the Matabele chief with whom he is seen bargaining in the film and that he never interviewed Paul Kruger, the President of the Transvaal, following the disastrous Jameson raid. But to criticize such inaccuracies is to quibble pettily. The story of Rhodes is first and foremost a story of conflict between Rhodes, the native chiefs and Kruger. Rhodes, the quibblers inform us, communicated with Kruger by letter and telegram. True, no doubt, but unfortunately there is no drama in a series of mere written communications. For the purpose of the film Berthold Viertel did quite rightly in bringing his characters into actual contact with each other. In any case such tactics are fully justified within the framework of the dramatic licence "act".

"Rhodes" opens with a spectacular land-rush by settlers to stake claims in the diamond fields of Kimberley, a scene reminiscent in its broad sweep and power of a similar episode in "Cimarron". Among the prospectors is Cecil Rhodes, a sick man given six months to live but who, by sheer will-power, triumphs over ill-health and accumulates the fortune in diamonds which gives him the necessary power to fight for a union of the white peoples of South Africa. He overcomes all obstacles but one — Kruger, the Boer leader whose stubborn resistance to Rhodes' progress becomes the pivot of the drama.

But even Kruger is eventually overcome and although Rhodes himself does not live to see the final materialization of his dreams he dies with the knowledge that they are within easy reach of fulfillment. In a deeply moving scene Rhodes is carried to his last resting place on a mountain top overlooking the sunny loveliness of a South African vale.

Strictly speaking it is a little doubtful whether "Rhodes" can be described as entertainment. It is often profoundly affecting, often excitingly spectacular and certainly always sincere, but its leisurely development and lack of romantic interest makes one speculate upon its chances of attracting the general public. Outside of Kruger's wife and a girl novelist who admires Rhodes for his work and his ideals, there are no women in the film. As the advertisements tell us the story of Rhodes is the story of a man in love, not with a woman, but with a continent.

Of the acting it is impossible to speak too highly. Walter Huston plays Rhodes with masterly restraint and admirable dignity while Oscar Homolka's Kruger is a superb study in stubborn, slow, unyielding resistance to the advent of new forces and new ideas. The acting of these two alone is worth any price of admission.

Great credit is due to Berthold Viertel for his sensitive direction and to Geoffrey Barkas who went to South Africa to reconstruct the spectacular trek of pioneers, the hugely impressive land-rush, and scenes of battle with natives.

If Gaumont-British make as thorough a job of their forthcoming Canadian epic, "The Barrier", as they have of "Rhodes", they will have performed a service of inestimable value to Canada.

Booing Quota Films

EFFORTS to check outbursts of rowdyism which are occurring with increasing frequency in West End theatres during exhibition of certain British pictures are being strenuously made by managers. During the last few months a number of British-made pictures have suffered as a result of noisy interruptions in the form of hand-clapping, foot-stamping, hissing and booing.

It is, perhaps, a point of significance, that in the majority of cases films treated by audiences in this fashion have been "quota" subjects — that is pictures made here by companies in observance of Government regulations.

A Paramount "quota", "School for Stars", was howled-down at the Plaza not long ago and had to be withdrawn; a Columbia offering was similarly treated recently.

No British audience has ever disapproved of a good British film produced by a reputable British firm. One has merely to check-up the box-office records of meritorious British product to discover the truth of this.

Nor, might I add, are British audiences in the habit of "killing" GOOD British "quota" films. First National have produced several "quota" subjects at their Teddington studios which have been praiseworthy, though modest, and which have been favorably noticed in the press. Universal have turned out some equally entertaining jobs of this kind, and so have Radio.

But the majority of "quota" output still remains just so much junk and balderdash fit only for the nearest garbage receptacle.

E. D. Leishman, RKO Pictures of London Will Resign After Successor Receives Appointment

British Film Digest

GAUMONT'S biography-film, "Rhodes of Africa", starring Walter Huston, is being released in Canada. . . . Elizabeth Bergner confined to nursing home with appendicitis; Constance Bennett laid-up with laryngitis: Laura la Plante (Mrs. Irving Asher) has given birth to a daughter . . . G-B's "Secret Service" with Madeleine Carroll, Peter Lorre, John Gielgud and Robert Young, directed by Hitchcock, has been finished . . . Robert Donat is getting excellent notices for his acting in the stage play "Red Night" . . . the new Paramount Theatre, Tottenham Court Road, proving a great centre of attraction. This is a super-cinema in the truest sense . . . Controversies raging everywhere over merits and demerits of "Things to Come" . . . some say the Wells film lacks feeling and humanity and is far too pessimistic . . . others would like to know just where feeling and humanity enters into a futuristic theme . . . but all agree that as a film it is a terrific achievement . . . B.I.P. are about to trade show "Once in a Million" with Buddy Rogers and Mary Brian, and "Living Dangerously" with Otto Kruger . . . Nothing is being done about rebuilding the Elstree studios recently destroyed by fire . . . all damage was fully covered by insurance . . . Ice hockey is becoming a craze here . . . Grosvenor's "The Cardinal" to be trade-shown shortly . . . Hammer Productions rumoured to be having a spot of bother with Paul Robeson. It is alleged that the former issued publicity stating the colored actor was leaving for Africa for exteriors for new film. Robeson, it is alleged, states that as a result of this incorrect announcement, he lost several concert engagements throughout the country . . . Action by Guy Bolton, author, against B.I.P. and Pathe for infringement of copyright in respect of the film, "Give Her a Ring", has resulted in a victory for the defendants . . . George Arliss rehearsing his new G-B film.

Barry Jones Likes Canada

BARRY JONES, the distinguished young actor who has toured the Dominion in Robert Sherwood's "The Queen's Husband" and in a repertoire of Shaw plays, tells me that he has a particularly soft spot in his heart for Canada.

I met Mr. Jones recently at the Welwyn studios where he is playing a leading role in Grosvenor's "The Gay Adventure" which Monty Banks is directing. Before that my last meeting with him was about four years ago in Winnipeg when he was appearing at the Walker Theatre in "The Queen's Husband".

"Our Canadian visits have always been successful," Mr. Jones told me. "Not only have our shows been splendidly supported but the marvellous hospitality of Canadians has been a pleasant memory indeed."

When I mentioned the Winnipeg Little Theatre Mr. Jones' eyes twinkled. "Ah, Lady Tupper," he exclaimed. "A remarkable woman. She has done so much for the drama in Canada. Her amateur dramatic organization has actually superseded the professional theatre in Winnipeg."

I was about to remind Mr. Jones that Lady Tupper's Little Theatre production of "The Queen's Husband" had been acclaimed a superior performance to Mr. Jones' own presentation of it — acclaimed superior, that is,. by Lady Tupper and the Little Theatre members! But just then Mr. Jones had to do a scene for his film.

Financial Reports

Market Letter

IN our market letter of two weeks ago, we stated that the market was moving in a 'line', and its future action would depend on the upward penetration of 237.98 of the combined Dow-Jones averages, or the downward penetration of 227.09 of the averages. The same week the average broke through the upper line in no uncertain manner, and investment buying on a large scale has continued in the market ever since.

As of last Saturday, the six-day moving average of the Pressure Indicator moved into a very strong position The underlying strength definitely implies a new forward move of good proportions.

Before this gets started, however, it is not unlikely that a small reaction may be seen. Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of this week has shown such a reaction which may continue to the end of this week, with a strong market next week.

Another point to remember is that the Dow-Jones Rail Averages are moving inexorably toward 51.27 which represents the point where students of the Dow Theory will begin buying, since it is the point where the Rails confirm the Industrials under the Dow Theory. While we do not use the Dow Theory in our interpretation, the fact that thousands of investors do must not be forgotten. This buying, coming into the market, is bound to have a noticeable effect on prices.

Since our last letter, we have had many requests from readers for a list of those stocks which we consider to be in a buying range. It is not our custom to make specific recommendations to other than our subscribers, but we are relaxing from our rule this week to give a list of those stocks which we believe offer the best opportunities for profit.

The copper group, to the accompaniment of increased volume, turned in a most excellent performance last week. Both CERRO DE PASCO AND KENNECOTT look as though they are going higher and are worth purchasing from a speculative standpoint.

Relative volume in MONTGOMERY WARD shortened up considerably. This stock normally makes a bottom to the accompaniment of light trading, and should be held for higher prices.

Activity in the rails is definitely increasing to the accompaniment of positive price action, which can only be interpreted favourably. In this group ATCHISON, NEW YORK CENTRAL and SOUTHERN PACIFIC are the most desirable, in the order named.

INTERNATIONAL TELEPHONE which has been sagging for the past week or so, should be purchased as soon as the stock shows signs of increasing interest on the upside.

While the position of the steel stocks is good and we believe established position should be held, a minor decline may be seen in these stocks before their advance is resumed. U. S. STEEL looks stronger than the rest of the stocks in this group and we anticipate higher prices for this stock in the near future.

The strength of the copper stocks may be put down in part to the expectation of a higher price due to increasing manufacture of armaments and also the continuation for another year of the restriction imposed on the production of copper production by the large producers of the red metal.

Readers may obtain information on stocks held, by writing to Mr. Ross in care of this paper or to INVESTOGRAPHS, INC., 128 Spadina Avenue, Toronto.

Will Rogers Memorial Hospital Fund Campaign Invites Contributions

Reviews and Previews

Fox Theatre, Phoenix - Manager, Bill Osborne
"THE PRISONER OF SHARK ISLAND"
Twentieth Century-Fox

"Jay L."

DARRYL F. ZANUCK'S challenge to Irving Thalberg's Academy prize winner, "Mutiny on the Bounty", is "The Prisoner of Shark Island", starring Warner Baxter. At times this picture is just as brutal, just as vivid and just as dramatic as "Mutiny", but unfortunately the terrific pace the production sets at the beginning and manages to keep up for several reels, is a hard race to run to a finish, and there is a lag.

Scenes such as where the villain, John Carradine — more about him later — repents his cruelty and shakes hands with the "Prisoner", spoiled the effect for me of the dramatic tenseness; it is movie stuff, but does not make a picture "great" and "The Prisoner of Shark Island" has about it the earmarks of "greatness".

The story is that of America's most tragic martyr, Dr. Samuel Alexander Mudd. France had her "Dreyfus", England her "Princes in the Tower", but perhaps most disgraceful of all is the story of Dr. Samuel Mudd of the United States of America, "Land of the Free". When John Wilkes Booth, actor and fanatic, assassinated Abraham Lincoln, the United States went crazy. Mob rule threatened to gain the upper hand, and to appease the hysteria of the people, eight persons, including one woman, were indicted as accomplices of Booth in his dastardly crime. Among these eight was Dr. Samuel Mudd of Maryland. Fleeing after the assassination, Booth stopped at Dr. Mudd's home, to receive medical attention — he had broken his leg. Dr. Mudd set the broken leg and then sent the man on his way. For this he was indicted on the charge of conspiracy and assassination, found guilty and sentenced to spend the rest of his days in "Shark Island", America's Devil's Island.

Here he was subjected to every kind of humiliation and cruelty imaginable, hated by all, prisoners and guards alike. After an unsuccessful attempt at escape, he was put in a dark, dank hole, and shut up there indefinitely.

When an epidemic of Yellow Fever breaks out on the island, and its only doctor succumbs to the dread disease, the commandant remembers Dr. Mudd, and he is brought out of his solitary dungeon to try and stem the Yellow Death. In the end he succeeds in stemming the tide of deaths, and so completely regains his former manhood, that he wins presidential clemency, and is pardoned.

As you can see, the plot has infinite possibilities, and Director John Ford has done a fine job with the material. There are moments when you will find yourself completely carried away by the emotion and drama of the piece. In those parts the production rises to great heights, but at other times — but then I have already covered that angle.

Warner Baxter gives easily the finest performance of his long career; his work as Dr. Mudd is magnificent. I remember about two years ago panning a picture of his, "Canary Island". Certainly the Warner Baxter of "The Prisoner of Shark Island" is a hundred per cent finer actor than the star of "Canary Island".

Gloria Stuart for once has been given a chance to act, or as some would say, to "emote". This is her first really dramatic role, and she carries it off very well.

Claude Gillingwater is very effective as Baxter's father-in-law, a dyed-in-the-wool sesessionist.

In the earlier part of this over-lengthy discourse I mentioned the villain, John Carridine. A newcomer to the screen. Carridine gives an unforgettable performance as a sadistic prison guard. I don't think I have ever seen anybody on the screen that I have hated more, unless it was Charles Laughton as Captain Bligh. You really have to see Carridine in this picture to really appreciate his fine work, but Darryl Zanuck saw him, and immediately gave him a long-term contract, and Zanuck is nobody's fool.

Fox Theatre, Tucson - Manager, Roy Drachman
"PETTICOAT FEVER"
M-G-M

ONE of the best comedies that your reviewer has seen in a long time is Metro's production of "Pettiocat Fever", co-starring Bob Montgomery and Myrna Loy.

The story of a radio operator up in the wastes of Labrador, who has not seen a girl in two years, and who suddenly becomes host to a lovely girl whose plane has cracked up, gives the inimitable Bob and the lovely Myrna, a perfect vehicle for their delightful nonsense. The picture is one long laugh after another, and is really the best thing to come out of Metro studios this month.

Featured with Bob and Myrna is Reginald Owen, in the role of Myrna's English fiance. Owen will be remembered for his superlative work as the villain in "Call of the Wild". His part in this picture, while less villainous, is otherwise quite similar, and he gives an equally fine performance as he did in the former production.

Scenes such as when Bob puts on a suit of tails to entertain Myrna and her fiance in the desolate wastes of Labrador; or when he hands himself a cigar for hitting a cowbell with a slingshot from a distance of two feet; all such parts as those mentioned reach the pinnacle of nonsensical comedy; nonsensical admittedly, but at the same time, laugh-provoking.

"Petticoat Fever" is bound to be a big box-office attraction, nor will anyone who sees it be disappointed, that is anyone who likes a good laugh.

PERSONAL MUSINGS

A MARRIAGE that has been pending for some time in Hollywood is that of cinemactor George Raft and socialite Virginia Pine. Our exclusive keyhole peeper tells us that that said matrimonial plunge will take place in the very near future.

A song that is becoming increasingly popular in this country in spite of the fact that it has been banned in various spots is "Gloomy Sunday", written by a young Hungarian, and brought to this continent and translated into English after its publication and rendition had been forbidden in Germany. Ten persons are supposed to have committed suicide after hearing this song, and for that reason it has been suppressed in many towns, but you can't keep a good thing down. The words are very morbid, but it has a haunting tune that you will never forget once you have heard it. Incidentally, it's about time a law was passed against "The Music Goes 'Round and 'Round".

Felix Feist, M-G-M Executive, Passes On After Long Illness

Conklin in Winnipeg

VICTOR McLAGLEN, burly actor who was recently awarded the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences' gold statuette for the best male performance of 1935, was once a "C.P.R. cop", it is revealed in the April 1 issue of the Canadian Pacific Staff Bulletin.

"Although it is almost 30 years since the celebrated actor protected Canadian Pacific property at Owen Sound, Ont., his record card is still on file," the Bulletin states. "The interesting document shows that McLaglen was born in December, 1881, and hopefully recorded his year of retirement as 1946. However, after striving for the company during the winter of 1906-07, April found him seized with wanderlust again and his services as company constable came to an end when he was reported A.W.O.L."

McLaglen won the Academy award for his work in "The Informer", considered by many critics the finest picture of the year.

BOUND and gagged by sheets torn from his bed, Joe Mardell, caretaker of the Film Exchange building Hargrave Street, Winnipeg, was forced to lie for more than an hour at the point of a revolver early April 1, while three gangsters ransacked nine film company offices, and stole more than $50 in petty cash, stamps and equipment.

Offices they broke into were: Empire Films Ltd.; Paramount Film Service, Ltd.; Distributing Corp. of Canada, Ltd.; Globe Films Ltd.; Columbia Pictures of Canada, Ltd.; Regal Films Ltd.; United Artists Corp. Ltd.; Vitagraph Ltd., and Twentieth Century Films, Ltd.

J. B. HUGHES, assistant motion picture censor at Vancouver, B.C., has been appointed censor in succession to Joseph Smith, who has been superannuated.

Mrs. Robert Smith, widow of the late Robert Smith, and daughter-in-law, of the late Mrs. Ellen Smith, a former member of the B.C. cabinet, will be assistant censor.

ALREADY there is much interest (promoted by the announcement) in the forthcoming appearance at the Uptown Theatre for the week of April 27, of the gorgeous production of "A Midsummer Night's Dream".

FOR the first time in film history, the Gaumont-British Picture Corporation, Ltd., will shortly begin work on a Canadian moving picture, of which all exterior scenes will be shot in this country.

Walter W. Murton, art director for the company, who will superintend the picture's filming, arrived in Winnipeg April 8.

This film, to be called "The Great Divide", is one of a series of Empire pictures being made by the company. Two pictures in this series are now almost completed, "Rhodes of Africa", and "Soldiers Three". Another film will have an Australian subject and background, and the other British Dominions will be similarly featured in other pictures.

As implied by its title, "The Great Divide" will be shot in the Rocky Mountains, the exteriors to be done at Revelstoke, Glacier and Kicking Horse Pass, B.C. The story deals with early construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and that company is working closely in co-operation in producing accurate detail.

Actual work on the exteriors is expected to start in about five weeks. During shooting, 2,000 local people will be used for mob scenes and riots.

The film, he added, would be essentially "masculine and meaty — a man's picture". Richard Arlen is the star, and is at present busy on the interior scenes in England. Geoffrey Barkas will direct.

Intended primarily for Canada and Canadians, the film, "The Great Divide" will be "premiered" in this country.

Lulu in Hollywood

Lulu S. Niemeyer

RADIO'S "LOVE ON A BET", with Jean Raymond, Wendy Barrie, Helen Broderick, William Collier, Sr., Spencer Charters, Walter Johnson, Addison Randall, Eddie Gribbon, Morgan Wallace, directed by Leigh Jason, is good for what ails you. Lose a wager and start a hitchhiking trip sans pants, to wind up 10 days later with pants, girl and $100, and you have some situation.

RKO'S "FOLLOW THE FLEET" with Fred Astaire-Ginger Rogers, Randolph Scott, Harriet Hilliard, Astrid Allwyn, Betty Grable, Harry Beresford, Russell Hicks, Brooks Benedict, Ray Mayer, Lucille Ball. Directed by Mark Sandrich, is everything you could expect and more from such a cast. It tops "Top Hat"—believe it or not. The Berlin music is swell, the story a clean love story, lots of fun, singing, dancing, plenty of boat scenes.

MGM'S "THE VOICE OF BUGLE ANN" with Lionel Barrymore, Maureen O'Sullivan, Eric Linden, Dudley Digges, Spring Byington, Charley Grapewin, Henry Wadsworth, William Newell, James Macklin, Jonathan Hale, Frederick Burton. Directed by Richard Thorpe. Is a grand story of a fine people, and what Lionel sacrificed for the love of a dog, man's best friend.

MGM'S "WIFE VERSUS SECRETARY" with Clark Gable, Jean Harlow, Myrna Loy, May Robeson, George Barbier, James Stewart, Robart Cavanaugh, Tom Dugan, Gilbert Emery. Directed by Clarence Brown. Is an eternal triangle so beautifully directed and played that it places a new high on the value of such a picture. Without this fine cast it would make a swell picture; with the cast, it's just about perfect.

The title tells the story, except this wife has some brains and uses them in the right place. Take the boy friend along to see this, girls. It's not a case of "I told you so", but how matters could and would be adjusted, if you used your head as well as your heart.

PARAMOUNT'S "DESIRE" with Marlene Dietrich, Gary Cooper, John Halliday, William Frawley, Ernest Gossart, Akin Tamiroff, Alan Mowbray, Zeffie Tilbury. Directed by Frank Borzage. Leaves one rather cold — just as cold as the thief Marlene is through all but the last sequences. The Dietrich fans may like it.

Massachusetts Supreme Court Calls Burlesque "Among the Lowest if not the Lowest Forms of Production on the Stage"

Meet the Exhibitor

Personal Interviews with the Theatre Manager, by Phil Stone.

MEET Harold Kay . . . slim, a few inches over five feet tall . . . a well-groomed young fellow . . . right down to the flower in his buttonhole . . . Harold is manager of the new Casino Theatre . . . this show is run on the stage and screen attraction lines . . . Harold is quite an ambitious young chap . . . has a fresh perspective . . . started in movie game back in '27 . . . ushered in the Academy Theatre for Mrs. Sarah Bloom . . . mother of Sam (B. & F.) Bloom . . . from there Harold became poster clerk for The Independent Poster Company . . . at night he was manager of the Rex Theatre . . . and during his lunch hour he did his booking . . . quite a guy, eh what? . . . for a time he was assistant booker with The Associated Theatres Ltd. . . . in the office of Oscar Hanson . . . . after this Harold became manager of the Rex Theatre . . . and now, still a young man . . . he is manager of Toronto's newest and most up-to-date stage and screen house . . . he would like to say hello, to Dick Maine at Sudbury . . . and to Dave Rubin in Hamilton . . . that's Harold Kay . . . he'll get places, believe you me!

THE Famous Players' newest theatre is named the Eglinton . . . and its manager, Robert J. Eaves . . . Mr. Eaves is another of the younger men . . . R. J.'s career is vivid and interesting . . . he studied at the Ontario College of Art . . . did commercial work for the Goblin and Star . . . ushered at the Parkdale . . . managed the St. Clair Theatre . . . the College . . . the Capitol at Guelph . . . and in fitting with his meteoric rise . . . the Capitol at Guelph is one of the oldest of the Famous Players' theatres . . . while the Eglinton is their newest . . . Robert J. is quite a stalwart young man . . . he is six feet nearer to heaven than the sidewalk is . . . he has a clean-cut look about him that promises great things from the R. J. corner . . . he started in the theatrical business 11 years ago . . . is quite fond of the Arts . . . poetically, he has a yen for Van Gough's . . . Grand Opera . . . and, of all things, Walt Disney's Silly Symphonies . . . practically, he realizes that opera, faithfully transposed to the silver screen would not be good box-office . . . so he sticks to pictures that bring the crowds . . . let them be a crooner's love story . . . or a bad woman's rejuvenation . . . Mr. Eaves can't see vodvil as a box-office attraction . . . "A well-balanced program of short features combined with an outstanding single feature," he sez, "will bring the crowds to your theatre, like Scotchmen to the bank when they start giving out five-dollar bills." . . . and so we leave R. J. Eaves, resplendent and handsome-looking in his tuxedo . . . convinced that he will some day be a bigger man than he thinks he can be.

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Show Business

M-G-M Purchase Friml Operetta

"The Firefly", Rudolph Friml's tuneful operetta which launched Emma Trentini to fame, has just been purchased by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer for screen production.

"The Firefly", with music by Friml and book by Otto Harbach, was first presented at the Empire Theatre in Syracuse, N.Y., October 14, 1912, was a Broadway sensation, and has since played all over the world. Among its famous song numbers are "Giannina Mia", "Sympathy", "When a Maid Comes Knocking at Your Heart", and "Love is Like a Firefly".

Spencer Tracy Gets Role "Captain Courageous"

When the colorful Gloucester schooner, Oretha Spinney, sails out to sea, none other than Spencer Tracy will be stationed at the helm.

Most important of all his starring roles since he signed a Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer contract a year ago, Tracy has been chosen to play the captain's role in Rudyard Kipling's saga of the Labrador fishing banks, "Captain Courageous," which will co-star Freddie Bartholomew with Jack Conway directing.

POSITION WANTED

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RKO Radio Short Subjects Near Completion

With only four more two-reelers remaining to be filmed, RKO Radio's short-subject program for 1935-36 is 90 percent complete, according to Lee Marcus, associate producer at the Gower Street studio.

This program, comprising six shorts in each of six groups classed respectively as Smart Sets, Radio Flashes, Radio Musicals, Headliners, Superbas and Edgar Kennedys, features the work of more than 150 important players and 1000 extras in the course of a year.

The entire program will be finished by the end of March, well ahead of schedule, according to Marcus' present plans.

James Whale, who has just finished directing "Show Boat" at Universal City, has been assigned to the next Margaret Sullavan picture. Three months ago Universal bought Clarence Budington Kelland's Saturday Evening Post-Harper Brothers' novel, "Roxana". Yesterday Leonard Praskins was commissioned to adapt it to the screen. Edmund Grainger, who produced "Sutter's Gold" will make the production.

Ernest Truex is the latest popular stage-and-screen personality to join the G-B star list, according to an announcement by Jeffrey Bernerd. Truex has been signed to play in a new comedy with Cicely Courtneidge. He sails aboard the S. S. Lafayette, Saturday, April 18th, bound directly for Shepherd's Bush.

Spencer Tracy Signed by M-G-M

Spencer Tracy is going to be a mighty busy man for the next year.

First, he has just signed a new starring contract with Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer studios.

At the present he is dividing starring honors with Clark Gable and Jeanette MacDonald in "San Francisco", the colorful story of early San Francisco in which Tracy plays the most unusual role of his stage and screen career — a priest in a Barbary Coast mission.

At the same time, he is appearing with Sylvia Sidney in M-G-M's dramatic film of mob violence, tentatively titled, "Mob Rule".

"Singing Kid" Held Over

Big week-end business, with the house filled to capacity at most performances, was done by "The Singing Kid", Al Jolson's new First National starring picture, which had its world premiere at the Strand Theatre, New York, last Friday evening. The film is being held for a second week, it is announced by the management, and a third is not unlikely.

THEATRE WANTED

By theatre owner of many years experience. Would like to rent theatre now operating, preferably in Toronto, or out of town. References from film exchanges. Apply

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349 Broadview Ave., Toronto, Ont.

Toronto Theatres

ROYAL ALEXANDRA — "The Great Ziegfeld", Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer production, with William Powell, Myrna Loy and Luise Rainer.

LOEW'S—Manager Jules Bernstein — "Wife vs. Secretary", a Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer production, with Clark Gable, Myrna Loy and Jean Harlow.

TIVOLI—Manager D. Krendal — Charlie Chaplin in "Modern Times", distributed by United Artists.

UPTOWN—Manager Jack Arthur — "The Trail of the Lonesome Pine", with Sylvia Sydney and Henry Fonda, a Paramount production.

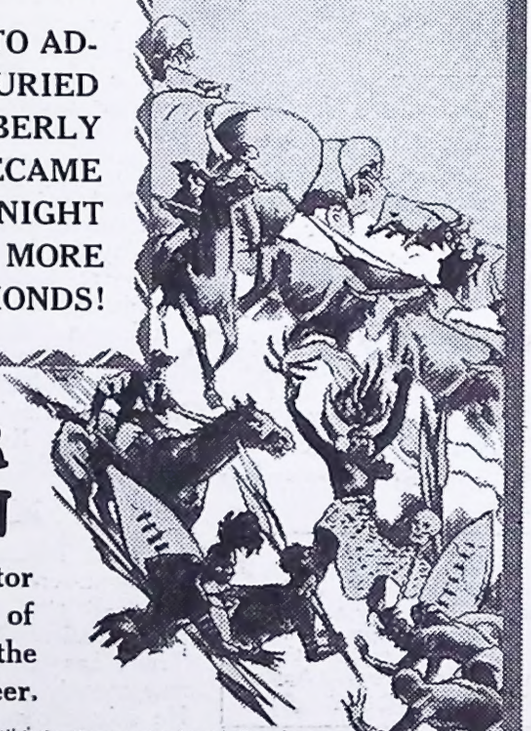
IMPERIAL—Manager Tom Daley — Shirley Temple in "Captain January", a Twentieth Century-Fox production.

SHEA'S—Manager Jerry Shea — Victor McLaglen and Freddie Bartholomew in the Twentieth Century-Fox production, "Professional Soldier".

Rupert Hughes Will Write Human Interest Story George Washington for M-G-M

The Amazing True Story of the Man Who Conquered a Continent and Established British Rule in South Africa!

HE BROUGHT ROMANCE TO ADVENTURE IN DIGGING BURIED TREASURE IN THE KIMBERLY FIELD, WHERE MEN BECAME MILLIONAIRES OVERNIGHT AND WOMEN WERE MORE PRECIOUS THAN DIAMONDS!



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